

**Intervention by the Delegation of Thailand,
Mr. Krerkpan Roekchamnong,
Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative
Item 3: clustered Interactive Dialogue
with the Special Rapporteur on the right to food and
the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an
adequate standard living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context
22nd Session of the Human Rights Council
25 February 2013**

Mr. President,

The Thai delegation thanks both the Special Rapporteurs for their presentation and wishes to share a few thoughts.

We welcome the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food which focuses on the role and empowerment of women in the context of their right to food including the recommendations contained therein.

Thailand takes note of the Special Rapporteur's finding on socio-economic obstacles and discrimination faced by women in realizing their right to food and other socio-economic rights. We share the view that education is the basic, yet the most important, human right that helps promote an equal treatment and employment opportunity between men and women. It lifts people out of poverty, and enhances the exercise of other human rights.

Mr. President,

Thailand is firmly committed to guaranteeing access to education for all with particular focus on enhancing its quality. We also attach high priority to education for girl which will further contribute to their future employment and the ultimate realization of the right to food for women and other members of their families.

Women empowerment is at the heart of the Thai Government's policy. We particularly recognize women's contribution to local economic development and care for the well-being of their family members. We also note that despite these valuable contributions, women still face various constraints and lack of resources which obstruct their capacities to realize their full potentials.

Therefore, the Thai Women Empowerment Fund has been established to improve the livelihood and capacity of women in all aspects. The fund increases women's access to productive resources at low interest rates, which in turn helps generate female employment. Such financial resources are important tools that help enhance women's participation in the socio-economic sphere, support women network organizations and the needed capacity building activities. With a secure profession and stable income, we believe women will be able to afford a healthy and productive life.

Mr. President,

We note with interest, as the report points out, that women empowerment helps ensure the right to food both through increased availability and access. As one of the world's major food producers, the agricultural sector has been the backbone of the Thai economy and is always regarded among the top priorities of the Thai Government. Thailand recognizes the importance of female agricultural workforce, and is committed to providing equal access to productive resources, markets, as well as social safety nets for both male and female farmers.

Yet, we feel that, while the report touches upon many interesting aspects of women empowerment, there is no explicit explanation on the linkage between empowerment of women and increased access to food. We would therefore be interested to hear from the Special Rapporteur whether and how empowerment of women directly enhances access to food.

Mr. President,

Regarding the report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, we note, as the report points out, that forced eviction remains a major cause of tenure insecurity. In Thailand's case, Section 42 of the Thai constitution underlines that full compensation must be provided for individuals affected from any expropriation and measures must be put in place to ensure a smooth relocation process.

Thailand agrees with the report that land administration and urban planning is not a purely technical matter. Land tenure is a political economy issue that requires a political solution viewed through a human rights-sensitive lens. The free market mechanism alone does not suffice in the allocation of land and housing, especially for the most vulnerable, under-privileged and marginalized groups of society.

The Thai Government has thus initiated the "First Home" program, with a property price cap and tax reduction, which aims at increasing access to housing for families and individuals who do not own a house. This program is targeted at enabling low-income population to obtain a secure tenure of their own accommodation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

* * * * *